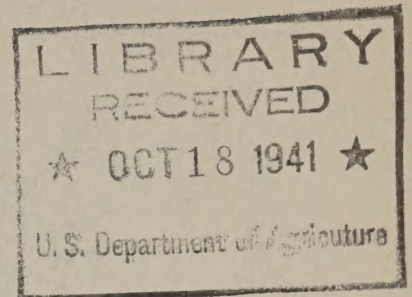


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Bureau of Agricultural Economics



THE POPULATION PROSPECT IN THE SOUTH

By O. E. Baker, Senior Social Scientist

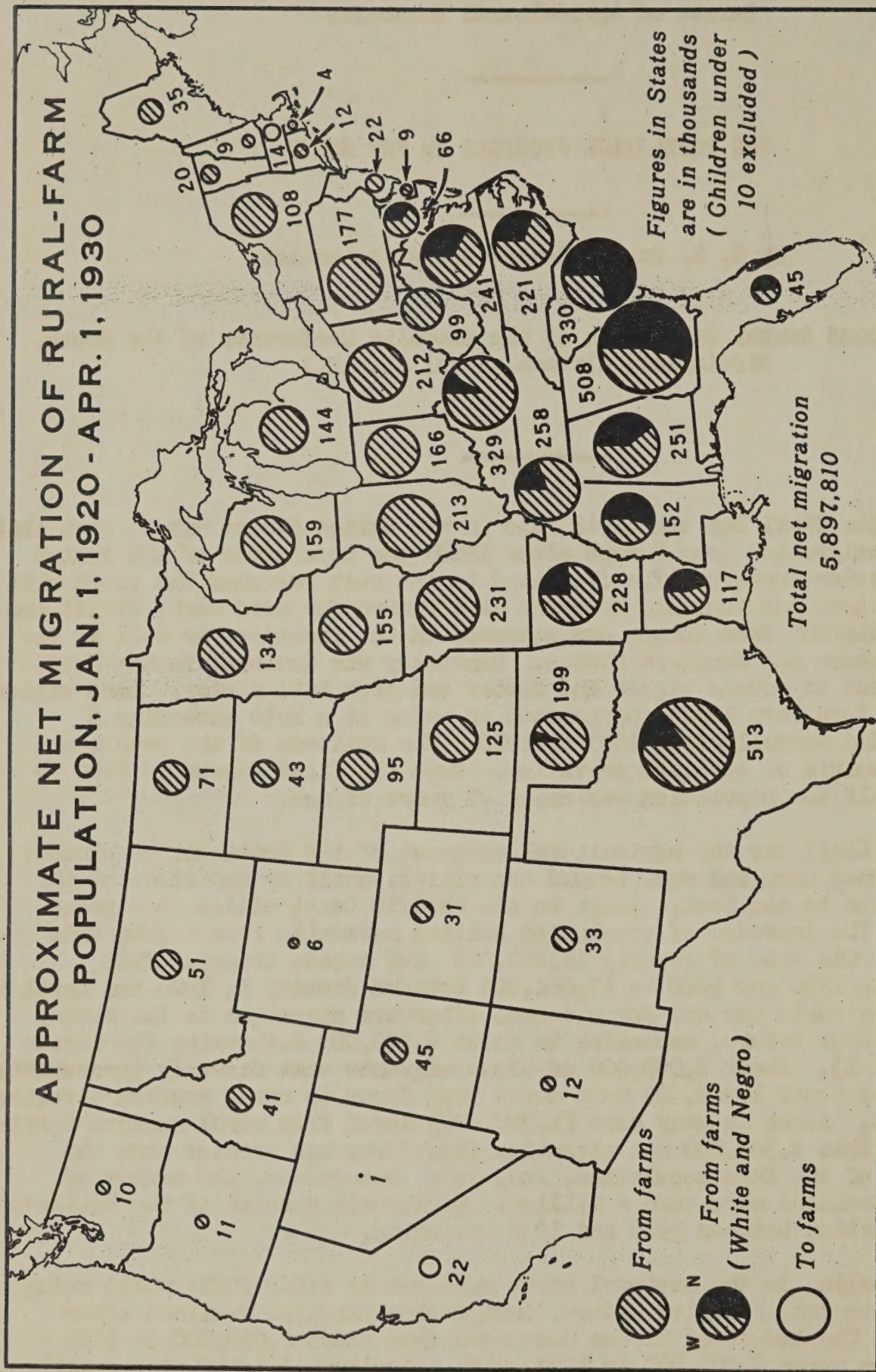
Address, Second Annual Convention of the Catholic Conference of the South,  
Birmingham, Alabama, April 21, 1941

Prior to the Civil War the birth rate in the United States was so high that (aided by some immigration from Europe after 1850) the population of the Nation doubled every quarter century. The free land to the west beckoned the youth with the promise of a home and economic security as a reward for hard work, thrift and honesty. The immigrant from Europe was welcomed on the frontier, as well as the migrant from Northern and Southern States. Democracy was dominant in the West. Every village hoped to become bigger and better and grow into a city. Land values were rising - in Iowa farm lands appreciated in value at a rate exceeding 5 percent, compounded annually, from 1850 to 1920. The attitude of the people was buoyant and the spirit of optimism prevailed. From the first census in 1790 to 1860 more than half the population was under 20 years of age.

After the Civil War the agricultural conquest of the continent continued, but migration turned more and more toward the cities, until by the close of the World War migration to the West, except to the Pacific Coast cities, had practically ceased. The increase of population shifted meanwhile from a geometric rate to an arithmetic rate of roughly 15,000,000 each decade (ranging from 11,597,000 between 1870 and 1880 to 17,064,000 between January 1, 1920 and April 1, 1930). During the World War and for a decade afterward migration to the cities was greater than ever before, amounting to about 6,300,000 net during the decade 1920-30 (Figure 1). About 5,000,000 of these migrants went directly (presumably) from the farms and about 1,300,000 more moved from farms to rural nonfarm territory (villages mostly). About as many more (1,300,000) moved from rural nonfarm territory to cities. This 6,300,000 net migration from farms was greater than the natural increase of the farm population, and, as a consequence, the number of people on farms declined more than a million. Eighty-six percent of the Nation's increase of population between 1920 and 1930 was urban.

A rapid decline in the national birth rate set in after 1921; while owing to legislative acts and executive orders, immigration likewise declined after 1923 (Figure 2). The number of births decreased from about 2,950,000 in 1921 (the peak year) to about 2,300,000 in 1933, with a horizontal trend since; while the net inflow of immigrants, which averaged several hundred thousand a year, both before and after the World War (reaching as high as 739,000 during 1923), changed to a net outflow of more than 100,000 in 1931 and again in 1932. In the years since, emigrants have about balanced immigrants. The number of deaths in





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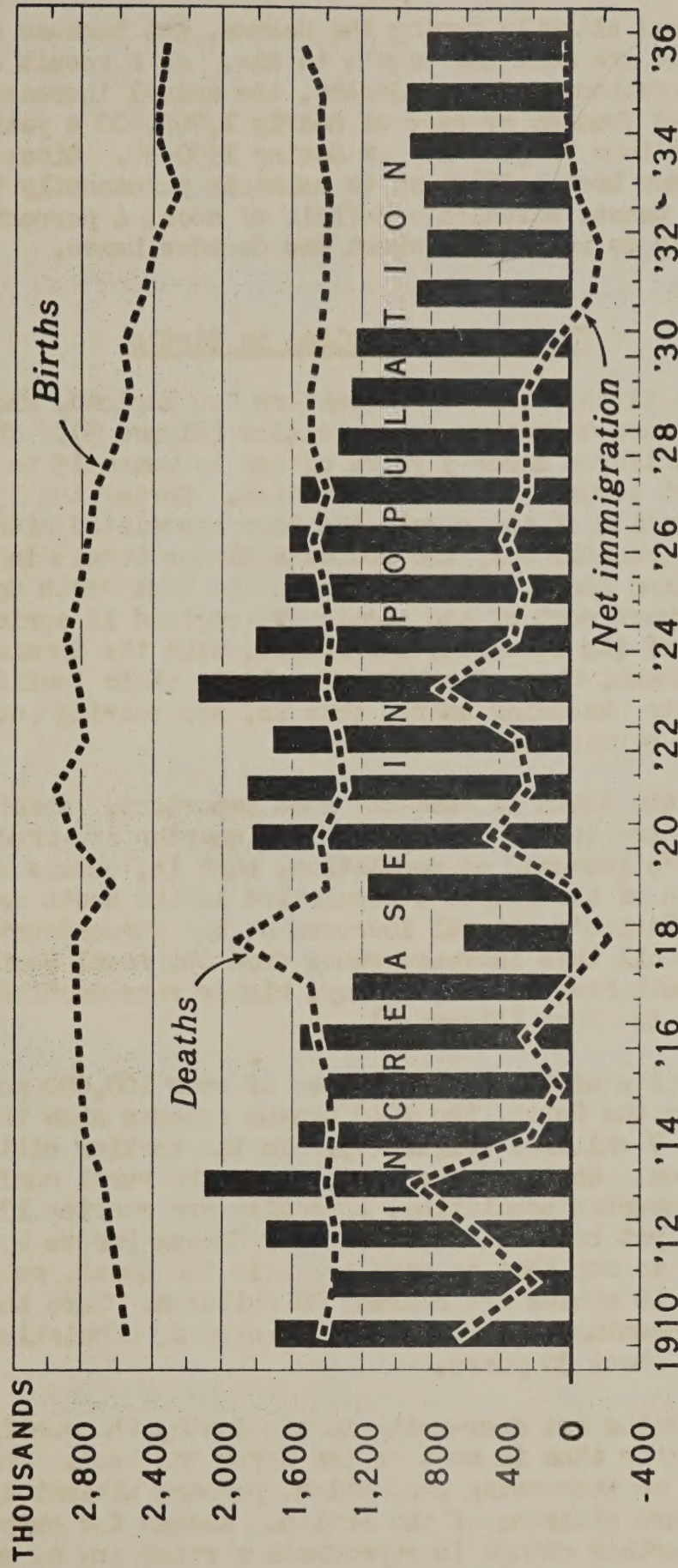
NEG. 25165 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Figure 1.- About 60 percent of the 6,300,000 net migration from farms during 1920-29 was from the South. Most of these migrants were young people. The birth rate is high among southern rural people, and economic opportunity was less than in the North. If it costs \$2,000 to rear and educate a child to the age of 15 years on farms in the South, these 3,700,000 migrants from southern farms represent a contribution of \$7,000,000,000 made during the decade by the farm population of the South to other parts of the Nation, mostly to the cities.



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# ANNUAL INCREASE OF POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES, BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND IMMIGRATION OR EMIGRATION, 1910-36



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. 23894

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Figure 2.- Between 1920 and 1930 the population of the United States increased about 1,600,000 a year. Now the increase is only 800,000. A stationary population is approaching rapidly, but it appears to be 15 to 20 years off, perhaps longer. The number of births has been trending downward since 1921. The number of deaths remains almost stationary, but must increase soon, because of the rapid increase in proportion of old people. Immigration is now an almost negligible factor in population increase, and restrictions on immigration seem likely to remain so long as unemployment persists. (Data from Thompson and Whelpton of Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems.)



the Nation has increased slightly during the decade, not because of a higher death rate, but because there are more old people to die. As a result of fewer births, the cessation of immigration, and more deaths, the annual increase of the Nation's population has declined from an average of nearly 1,700,000 a year during the decade 1920-29 to less than 900,000 a year during 1930-39. Since about 1932 the number of births has not been sufficient to maintain permanently the population of the Nation. The 1940 Census revealed a deficit of about 4 percent. The crest of population seems likely to be reached about two decades hence.

### The Regional Decline in Births

This decline in births started in southern New England, where industry was developing and youths were migrating to the cities (Figure 3). The Census of 1800 revealed a ratio of children under 5 years of age to women 15 to 48 years of age (childbearing age) much lower than in other States. During the 150 years since, the process of urbanization of the people has been associated with a declining birth rate, until now probably only the Southern States (excluding Maryland and Florida), one New England State, a few States in the West North Central group, notably the Dakotas, where most of the people are engaged in agriculture and religion retains much of its strength, New Mexico, with its Spanish-American population, Utah and Idaho, where the Mormons hold to their familistic culture, have a reproduction rate exceeding unity, that is, are rearing enough children to maintain population permanently stationary.

Of these areas the South is much the most important. About one-quarter of the Nation's people are in the South, but this quarter are producing nearly one-half of the Nation's increase of population, that is, excess of births over deaths. The one-fourth of the Nation's population in the South are contributing nearly as much to the Nation's natural increase as the three-fourths in the North and West. Practically all this increase comes from the rural South, for the urban people in the South have little, if any, higher reproduction rate than those in the North and the West (Figure 4).

In the large cities of the Nation, those of over 100,000 population, most of which are located in the North, the 1940 Census returns show that 10 adults are rearing only about 7 children (Figure 5). In the smaller cities they are rearing about 8 children. On the other hand, among the rural nonfarm people, that is, village and suburban population, 10 adults are rearing 13 to 14 children. These ratios have not yet been released from the Census Bureau by States, but I think it entirely safe to say that in many areas in the South, notably in the Appalachian Mountains, 10 adults are rearing 20 children. Were there no migration from these areas and assuming this birth rate persisted, population would double in a generation, or in about 30 years.

Although birth rates are decreasing in the South, the decline apparently is little, if any, greater than in most of the North and West. The South seems destined to contribute an increasing proportion, perhaps ultimately a dominating proportion, of the future citizens of the Nation. Assume for purposes of comparison that there be no further change in reproduction rates and no migration:



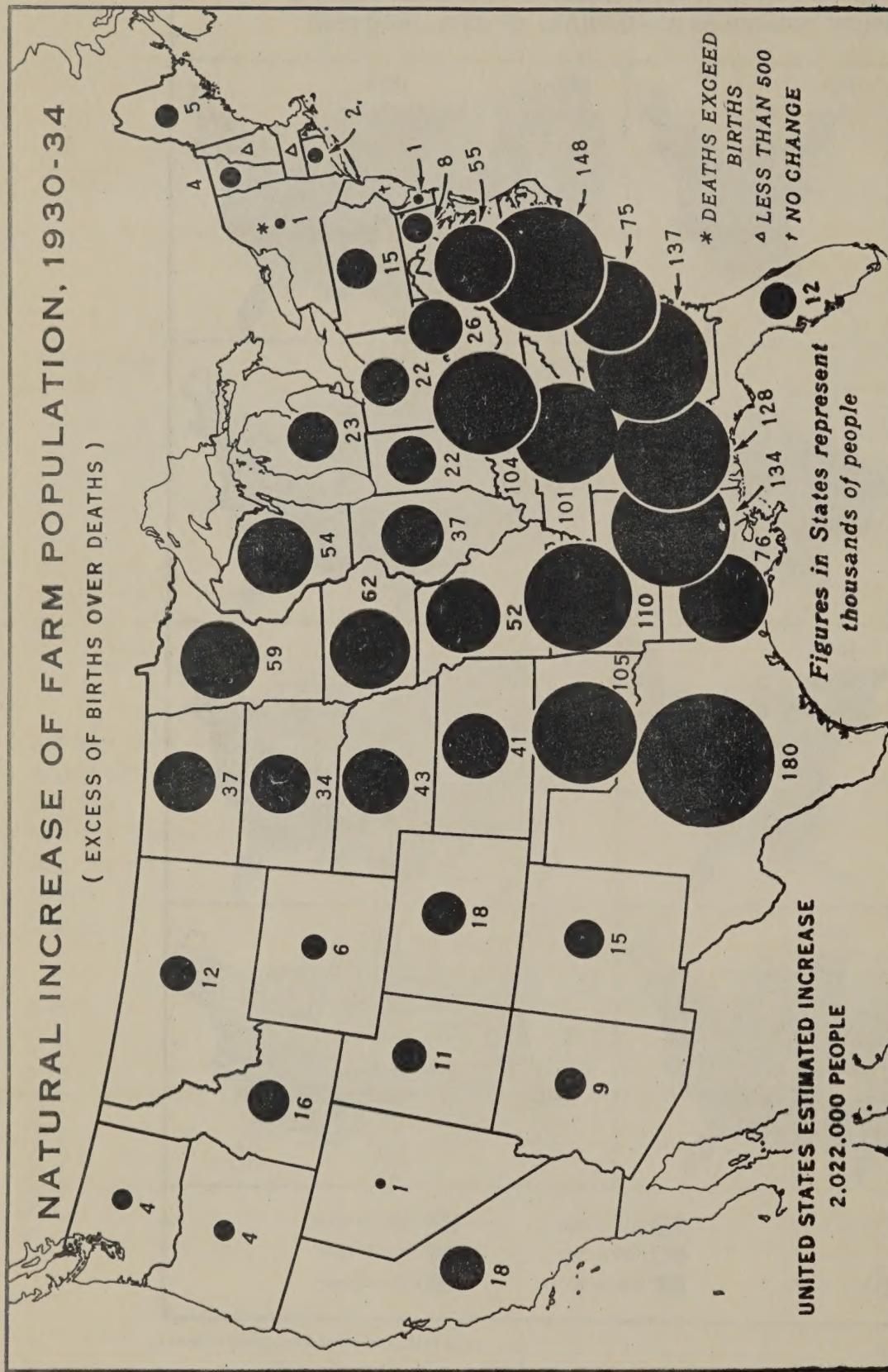


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**Figure 3.-** The decline in the birth rate (as measured by the ratio of children to women) started in southern New England as early as 1800 and has spread west and south during the past century and a third with the progress of industrialization and urbanization of the people.





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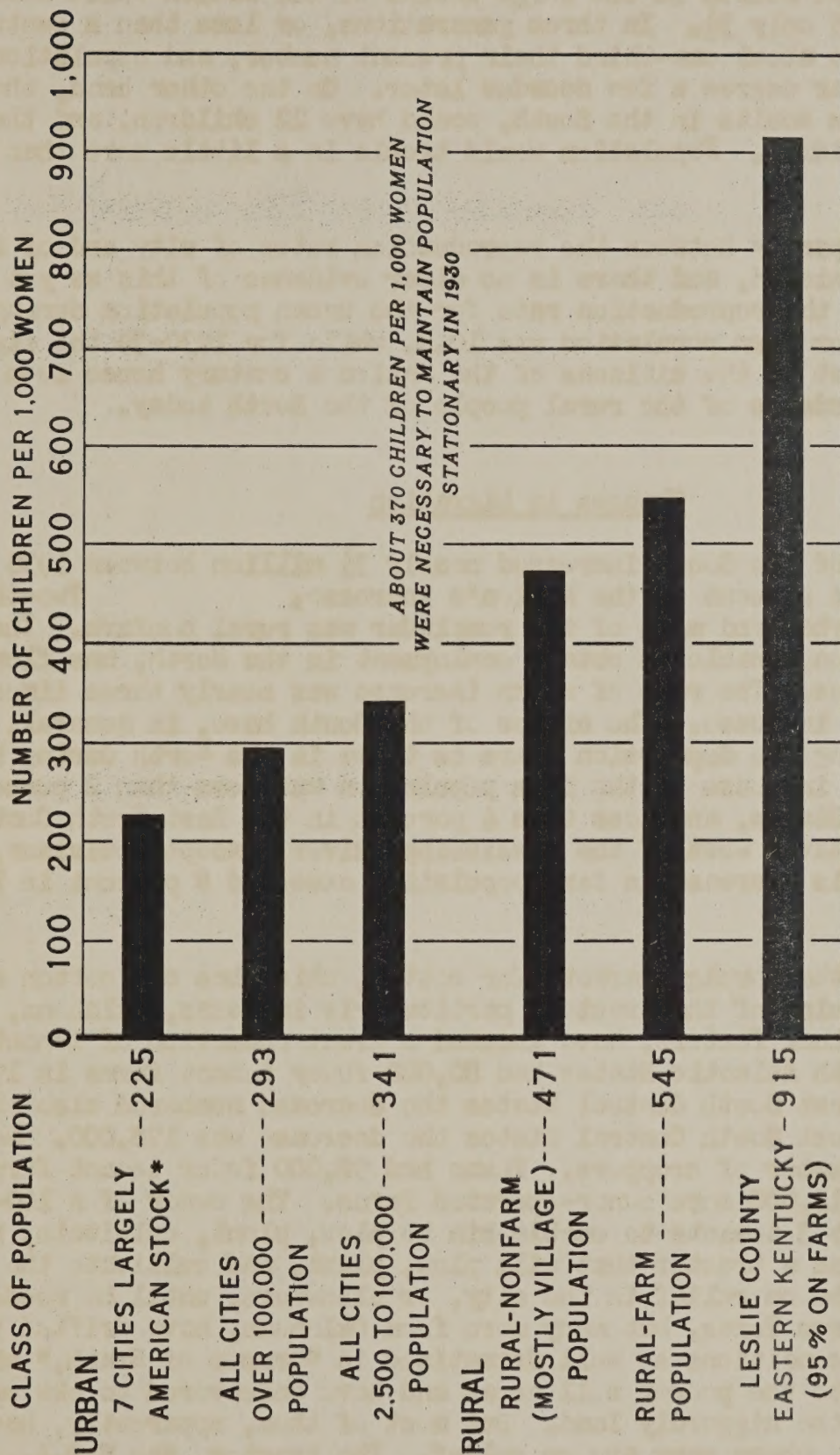
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BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Figure 4.- Note that this map relates only to farm population, not total population, for which no map has been made. Two-thirds of the natural increase in the farm population during 1930-34 occurred in the South, where only half the farm families are located. But the average value of farms in the South is only about one-third that in the North and West. The burden of feeding, clothing, and educating the farm children must be heavier in the South, or the levels of living and education must be lower. In reality both conditions exist. But it is evident that the Nation's citizens of the future are coming in increasing proportion from the farms of the South.



# NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE PER 1,000 WOMEN 15 TO 45 YEARS OF AGE IN UNITED STATES, APRIL 1, 1930



\* PORTLAND (OREGON), SAN FRANCISCO, LOS ANGELES, KANSAS CITY, ST. LOUIS, NASHVILLE, AND ATLANTA

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Figure 5.- In 1930 the seven cities largely of American stock lacked 40 percent of having enough children to maintain their population permanently stationary without accessions from outside, and all cities of over 100,000 population had a deficit of 20 percent, while the smaller cities had a deficit of 7 percent. On the other hand, the rural nonfarm (mostly village and suburban) population had a surplus of 27 percent, and the farm population of 50 percent. In 1930, urban deficit and rural surplus nearly balanced. Since 1930 births have declined nearly 10 percent.



The 7 children of the 10 adults in the large cities of the Nation would have only 5 children, and these 5 only  $3\frac{1}{2}$ . In three generations, or less than a century, births would decline to about one-third their present number, and population would have declined in similar degree a few decades later. On the other hand, the 15 children of the 10 farm adults in the South, would have 22 children, and these in turn would have 33 children. Population would treble in a little more than a century.

Unless this disparity between the reproduction rates of city and of farm people is greatly diminished, and there is no clear evidence of this as yet (the percentage decrease in the reproduction rate for the urban population during 1920-29 was 17.1 and for farm population was 10.8, while for 1930-39 the figures are 14.0 and 14.4), most of the citizens of the Nation a century hence seem very likely to be the descendants of the rural people of the South today.

#### Changes in Migration

The population of the South increased nearly  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million between 1930 and 1940, which is about 44 percent of the Nation's increase. Two-thirds of this increase was urban and most of the remainder was rural nonfarm. The rural surplus population, unable to obtain employment in the North, has flowed into the Southern cities. The rate of urban increase was nearly three times the rate of national urban increase. The cities of the South have, in general, grown almost as rapidly during the depression years as those in the North during the preceding decade. The increase of the farm population was less than 2 percent in the South Atlantic States, and less than 4 percent in the East South Central States, while in the States west of the Mississippi River, except Louisiana, a decrease occurred. This decrease in farm population exceeded 8 percent in Texas and Oklahoma.

The decline in the foreign markets for cotton, which has cut cotton acreage almost in half, the coming of the tractor, particularly in Texas, Oklahoma, and the Yazoo Delta, and other factors, have induced a great reduction of tenant farms in the South. The South Atlantic States had 80,000 fewer tenant farms in 1940 than in 1930; in the East South Central States the decrease numbered also about 80,000; while in the West South Central States the decrease was 178,000. Most of this decrease was in number of croppers. Texas had 98,000 fewer tenant farms in 1940 than in 1930 and 14,000 more owner-operated farms. The owner of a 160-acre farm, who formerly kept 3 tenants to enable him to plow, plant, cultivate, and pick his cotton, now has a tractor that will plow, plant, and cultivate the cotton, while his pickers may be on relief in the city, or elsewhere, until he needs them. A few former tenants from Texas, but many more from Oklahoma, have drifted to California, producing conditions so well dramatized in "Grapes of Wrath," while others have retired into the poorer soil areas and have endeavored to eke out a miserable living from the niggardly land. But most of them, apparently, have migrated to the cities, where many are on relief. The tractor, the W.P.A., and other agencies have enabled the farm owner in the more level portions of the South to increase the acreage he can operate with his own labor, except for picking cotton, to an area comparable to that operated by farmers in the North.



The farm tenants, particularly the croppers, in the South have been caught between the scissors blades of unemployment in the North, damming up the outward flow of youth, and the decrease in cotton acreage in association with rapid advances in agricultural technique in the South, reducing the need for labor on the farms. In addition, the operations of the W.P.A. have, in some instances, meant that farm owners have been relieved of the need of keeping croppers throughout the year in order to have labor available to pick cotton.

### Shifts in Type of Farming

The acreage of cotton, as noted above, has declined nearly one-half - from over 43,000,000 to less than 23,000,000. The only other commercial systems of farming that afford promise of providing a livelihood for a large proportion of the former cotton growers involve the feeding of livestock. Acreage of corn in the South increased 10 percent between 1929 and 1939, and of hay 50 percent. Such livestock systems of farming, except poultry, require more land per farm than cotton, perhaps, on the average, twice the acreage. Nearly 2,000,000 farmers, including croppers, grew cotton in 1929, but less than 1,600,000 in 1939. On the other hand, the number of farms in the South reporting cows milked, increased from 1,890,000 to 2,230,000, or by 13 percent, while the number of cattle on farms increased nearly 20 percent and that of breeding sows increased more than 50 percent. A great shift in type of farming in the cotton growing areas particularly is in progress, and it is tending to push the cropper, and many real tenants also, off the land.

### Increasing Size of Farms

These changes in types of farming and in farm practices, particularly the increasing use of mechanical power, are reflected in the increasing average acreage per farm. In the South Atlantic States, all farms in 1930 averaged 82 acres in area, while in 1940 the average was 92 acres. For the East South Central States the corresponding figures are 69 and 73 acres; for the West South Central States, 167, as compared with 208 acres. In Texas, where the progress of mechanization has been rapid, the automobile has been instrumental in the establishment of many small part-time farms around the cities, while the tractor has aided in consolidating more remote medium-size farms into larger farms. The number of farms in Texas of under 3 acres doubled during the decade, also those of 3 to 9 acres, whereas those of 20 to 49 acres dropped from 120,000 down to 70,000 and those of 50 to 99 acres from 123,000 down to 89,000. On the other hand, farms of over 500 acres increased in number from 26,000 to 32,000. The average size of all farms increased from 252 acres to 330 acres.

However, there has been an increase in the farm population per farm. In the South Atlantic States, the increase was from 5.5 in 1930 to 5.8 in 1940. In the East South Central States the increase was from 4.7 to 5.1; in the West South Central from 4.8 to 5.2 persons. In Texas the increase was from 4.7 to 5.1. Apparently in many cases the former tenant has been changed into a wage hand, and two census farms in 1930 have been made into one farm in 1940. In other cases, the son, unable to get a job in town, has been taken into partnership, or employed as a wage hand, or is working merely for board, lodging and spending money.



### Father and Son Partnerships in Farming

In the Corn Belt, where rural youth surveys have been made in several counties, notably in Indiana, the so-called "agricultural ladder" is being replaced by father-and-son partnerships, and I surmise such a shift is taking place in many parts of the South, though probably not so rapidly. The "agricultural ladder" is the name given to the process by which many young men, without land, have climbed to farm ownership. Typically the young man started to work for a neighbor, when 16 or 18 years of age, and saved some money. After a few years he had saved enough to make a payment on a team of horses, a plow and other machinery, and buy some livestock. He then started as a tenant farmer on a small farm. Sometime later he had accumulated enough capital to operate a larger farm. By the age of 40 or 50 he became able, perhaps, to buy a farm with a mortgage. About the time that death overtook him the mortgage had been paid off. Meanwhile his children had gone to town.

This process is gradually being replaced in the Eastern Corn Belt, at least, by the father taking the son into partnership, or employing him as a hired man either with or without cash wages. This change is owing largely to two new factors that have come into the farm situation, - unemployment and the rubber-tired tractor. Many farmers' sons during the last decade could not get a job in town, so remained at home. The father found it necessary to provide employment, and the son greatly desired a tractor. In the Corn Belt a tractor is as essential to "keeping up with the Joneses" as an automobile is in the city. So a tractor is bought, commonly on credit. Immediately the need of operating more land becomes apparent, in order to make payments on the tractor and utilize it adequately. If the farm next door cannot be rented, the farmer and his son will go as far as 5 or even 10 miles to rent more land. Sometimes they rent the fields of a farm on which old people live, no longer able to farm effectively, and carry the grain and hay to their own barn to feed. This is hard on the rented land. Sometimes the father and son will rent a number of 40 or 80 acre tracts owned by part-time farmers who work in the cities and cannot afford to have a farm outfit of their own. But more frequently a tenant farm is rented, and the tenant is forced to find employment elsewhere.

About one-fourth of the farm operators in northern Indiana, mostly father and son partnerships, are thus expanding the area they operate, and they now operate about half the farm land. In one township in Blackford County, Indiana, it was found that of the tenants who had been dispossessed by these expanding operations of other farmers, three had risen to ownership during the last 5 years, one by inheritance, three had moved to larger tenant farms, five had obtained other farms of about the same size, three had become day-laborers in the country, and five had gone to town. The present occupation of these five was unknown, but several, it was believed, had sought W.P.A. relief. The census figures for the South suggest that a smaller proportion of the dispossessed tenants than in Indiana have risen to ownership during the last 5 years, and that a larger proportion have gone to town.

In Texas, for example, there has been, apparently, little net migration of farm people out of the State, and a very large increase in the urban population. Between 1930 and 1940 the urban population of Texas increased 22 percent, the rural nonfarm population increased 23 percent, while the rural farm population



decreased 8 percent. The increase in the urban population of Louisiana was over 17 percent, of Arkansas 13 percent, of Mississippi 28 percent, of Alabama 15 percent, of Florida 37 percent, of Georgia 20 percent, of South Carolina 25 percent, of North Carolina 20 percent. The rural farm population decreased slightly in Arkansas, Georgia, and South Carolina, and increased slightly in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and North Carolina. In Oklahoma it decreased 9 percent, but in Florida it increased 10 percent. As migration out of the Southern States, except Oklahoma, was only about one-third as great during 1930-39 as during the previous decade, it is clear that the equivalent of the natural increase in the farm population of the South during the last decade has migrated mostly to southern cities and adjacent rural nonfarm areas.

### The Farm Population Prospect in the South

During the last decade this migration has been mostly the result of the push from the farms. During the next few years, as the defense program develops, there may be also a pull from the cities, and from the cities of the North as well as those of the South. The immediate prospect, therefore, is for a decline in the farm population in much, if not most, of the South.

But looking beyond the next few years to the time when the defense industries will be declining, it seems possible that there may develop a back-to-the-land movement exceeding in magnitude that which developed during the early 1930's. With the farms in the more level areas of the South more mechanized, as well as the farms in the North and West, it appears quite likely that the pressure of population in the mountainous and other areas less amenable to mechanization, will become more severe, even, than during the last depression.

A few years ago I visited Breathitt County in Eastern Kentucky, where a large number of young married folks had returned from Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Akron, Middleton, and other manufacturing cities, seeking shelter and sustenance with relatives and friends, and where a large number of youth, who normally would have migrated to northern cities, had been backed up on farms. It was traditional in this county to share one's income, however meager, with relatives, even though the relationship might be remote. Nevertheless, about 40 percent of the families in the county were on Government relief, and I could not but pause to think what would have happened without this aid from outside. As I contemplate the possibilities of the next decade, I am compelled to pause again, and ponder the problems of unemployment and poverty which may face us again.

### The Family and Economic Security

I have reached the conclusion, and may I emphasize it is wholly a personal conclusion, that the ultimate assurance of economic security will be found in the family, more than in the State. Even during the recent depression, when the resources of the Government were ample, it appears from the 1937 Census of Unemployment that half or more of the unemployed were being supported by their families and by private charities. In older civilizations, China for example, the family appears to be the almost sole assurance of economic security. In such civilizations, the bearing of such a burden of poor relief would be quite beyond



the power of the state. This proved to be the case also in Germany, when the Erbhof law in Prussia was extended by the Nazi regime to all the Reich, as one means of providing relief. More than half the farms were made Erbhofs, relieved of mortgage debt and rendered incapable of sale, in order that all members of the family might return to the hereditary home and find shelter and sustenance. Equally important, these Erbhof families were expected to provide the future citizens of the State in increasing proportions.

The rural people of the South, like the Erbhof farmers of Germany, seem destined to provide in increasing proportions the future citizens of the Nation. Can the farmers of the South also provide economic security for their children during periods of economic depression in the future, when many will doubtless return to the farms as they have in the past? Most farms in the South, if tenant holdings be considered farms, as they are by the Census, are one-family farms. Not only are these one-family farms too small, in most cases, to support a second family, but also they do not permit continuity of family proprietorship. On the average, the son is born when the father is about 30 years of age, that is, about as many sons are born before this age as after. Twenty to 25 years later the son wants to marry and have a home. But the father is only 50 to 55 years of age, and there is no room for a second family on most southern farms. The father is not able to retire, nor ready to die. Hence, prior to the recent economic depression, the son left the farm, and sought employment in the city. The daughter did likewise, indeed, girls leave the farms about 2 years younger than the boys. Some 15 to 25 years later the father dies, or retires, though few farmers have been able to retire in recent years. But the son has by that time become established in some city occupation, and the daughter has married a city man. They are no longer interested in returning to the farm to live. So they rent the farm, or sell it. If they sell it, few farm boys or their fathers are able to buy, so it is generally sold to a city man as an investment, and he rents it. In either case, it becomes a tenant farm. And as a Presbyterian minister in South Carolina remarked to me some time ago, "When half the income of these little farms has to be paid as rent, there is not enough left to support a church."

#### The Problem of the Proletariat

In order to achieve family continuity in farming, it appears necessary, therefore, that farms be large enough to employ two men, - to bridge the span of years between the time when the son reaches maturity and the father reaches senility. In Germany we found two houses on most farms, or else a house large enough for two families. I surmise this is the case also in most countries in which agriculture has attained stability. This is the trend in the Corn Belt at present, and it may be the trend in the South also, although no youth surveys have as yet been made in the South, and we do not know what is happening other than the changes indicated by the Census figures.

If this trend persists for a few decades in the Corn Belt, it will involve the expulsion from agriculture of a goodly portion of the tenants, who now number nearly half the farmers in several Corn Belt States. In most of the South the proportion of tenancy is even higher and the development of such a system of family continuity in farming in the Cotton Belt would have even more profound consequences than in the Corn Belt.



Is it necessary to cast out a large portion of the tenant half of our farm population in these leading agricultural regions into the economic and social dangers of urban life in order to preserve the rural family as an institution for the reproduction of the race, the accumulation of wealth from generation to generation, and the transmission of culture, including religion, from parent to child. Yet how otherwise can economic security in agriculture be provided by the family.

An alternative, of course, is the nationalization of the land, that is, its ownership by the government. This might restore, in a measure, the agricultural ladder, for as each farmer died the government could turn over his farm to a young man. It could also provide control over farm practices, and would tend to conserve the soil resources. But it might, in the hands of unscrupulous politicians, lead to the loss of political freedom, possibly also religious freedom. And freedom in the long run, is, I believe, essential to scientific progress, the accumulation of capital, the preservation of democracy, and the development of personality. I consider the development of personality and the preservation of the doctrine of the infinite worth of the human soul as the touchstone by which to test the validity of all economic as well as social programs.

But I see all around me this drift of the poor toward dependence upon the state, with the resultant impairment of personality. And I envision a few years ahead as the defense program subsides, another period of unemployment and dependency. Relatively few people in the United States today save for future needs. A recent Gallup poll indicated that 60 percent of all urban families, if the bread winner lost his or her job, would have to apply for relief in six months.

Here is the great problem of the Nation, as I see it, - the problem of the proletariat, the propertyless, who, as in the ancient Roman world, are also the breeders of the next generation in disproportionate proportions. Property not only gives power, it also gives freedom. I doubt if there can long be freedom without property. Three-fourths of the gainfully employed people of the Nation today are in positions where they can be hired or fired. When a man is dependent upon another man, or upon a corporation, or even upon the state, for the support of himself and his family, he becomes cautious as to what he says or does, lest he give offense. The farmers who own their farms, are, in my opinion, the last great bulwark of freedom in the United States. This bulwark, I consider, must be preserved.

#### For Freedom and Democracy

In pondering this problem in recent months, particularly since working on the youth surveys in the Corn Belt, I have been unable to escape the conclusion that the only agency with the power to cope with this expanding problem of poverty is the state, that is, the government, Federal, State, and local. But I have likewise viewed with deep apprehension the drift toward dependence upon the state, which is associated with decline in recognition of individual responsibility and in integrity of the family. Moreover, to succeed in the difficult task of preserving freedom and democracy, while the economic system is being reorganized, it is necessary that there develop, particularly among the officials of the state and among the farming people, a philosophy of values associated with intensity of purpose, in brief, a religion. One man with conviction has the strength of ten without conviction.



The religions of collectivism are, I surmise, making more rapid progress in the cities than many of us realize. They accord with the feeling of helplessness engendered by the intricate division of labor in modern industry and the development of a labor market in which the worker's personality is submerged in the mass of other workers. In agriculture the family is the economic as well as the social unit, but in our industrial and commercial system the individual tends to become the economic unit and the state tends to replace the family and the church in the education of the child, the provision of economic security, and now, in much of Europe, in inculcating religion. Moreover, the manner of life in the cities, especially the congestion in apartment houses and tenements weakens the family ties and promotes the decline in births. But more important, probably, in explaining the decline in births is the modern materialistic concept of success. Money income becomes the measure of success, and this is manifested by conspicuous consumption. Thrift and saving cease to be virtues, while corporations and the state become the custodians of capital. Production is restricted in order to raise price, and contests develop between pressure groups to obtain the support of the state. These things tend not only toward the dwarfing of the personality of the citizen, but also toward poverty and dictatorship. The gains of science are being lost for a large proportion of the people because of a selfish and disunited economic system.

Now, if the South also becomes dominantly urban and develops an economic system like that in the North, the task of preserving freedom and democracy in the Nation will become very difficult. If the South can remain largely rural and religious, it seems likely to exert a great influence on the Nation's destiny, through the increase of population and migration of youth to the North. Is there any way to maintain, and, if possible, increase, the rural population of the South and at the same time alleviate the poverty? There is a way, I am sure, if the men of science, of the state, and of the church will unite in a mighty effort of education, probably through small study groups, to help the people understand the situation, and the consequences of present trends, and guide them in developing an economic system based on cooperation rather than competition and on conservation rather than exploitation.

In the South there is about twice as much land as that used at present for crops and improved pasture, and this unused land does not differ greatly in quality from that already in use. But it needs to be cleared and clearing is costly, particularly in labor. And crops and pasture yields on all these lands, used and unused, probably could be doubled by the use of fertilizer, crop rotations including legumes, and barnyard manure. In the United States there is twice as much crop acreage per capita as in Germany or France and several fold as much pasture land per person. Land in our country has been abundant and abused. In part, as a consequence, many of our people have lost the love of the land, and sense of responsibility for the preservation of its fertility. Our economic system, with its discount of the future at 5 or 6 percent has also tended toward soil depletion.

But the Nation, like the family, must strive for continuity of existence - must often sacrifice the present for the future. To be willing to make this sacrifice, a philosophy of values associated with intensity of purpose, in brief, a religion, is imperative. The future is full of hope for the South if the farmers can recover the ownership of the land and their feeling of dignity and can sense the values of rural life and realize the invaluable contributions they are making to the welfare of the nation. Ideals are now of deeper significance to American agriculture than bigger crops or better livestock, or prices of farm products, or standards of living, important as these material things undoubtedly are, for ideals are essential to the survival of the people and of the partially Christianized civilization that has developed during the centuries.